DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 042 676 SO 000 241

AUTHOR	Angell, Robert C.
TITLE	SRSS in the Homestretch.
INSTITUTION	American Sociological Association, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY	National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Sep 70
NOTE	8p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting, American Sociological Association, Washington, D.C., September, 1970
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.50
DESCRIPTORS	Inductive Methods, *Inquiry Training, *Instructional Materials, *Resource Materials, *Senior High Schools, Social Studies Units, *Sociology
IDENTIFIERS	*Sociological Resources for the Social Studies, SRSS

ABSTRACT

This is a brief review of the materials created by the Sociological Resources for Social Studies Project (SRSS) and published by Allyn and Bacon. Eleven of twenty-nine short units in "Episodes in Social Inquiry Series" are available or in press. This entire series should be completed by the end of 1971. All of the episodes emphasize the inquiry mode, and include inductive data analysis exercises. They are being used in a variety of social studies courses: Problems of Democracy, Social Problems, American History, Political Science, and Economics. "Inquiries in Sociology," an inquiry-oriented, one-semester course for eleventh and twelfth grades, will be published in the fall of 1971. A paperback series of readings on broad sociological topics which can be used as background for class work in a variety of social studies courses has been developed. Five of these books are now being published, and the sixth and seventh will be available in late 1971. In addition, a teacher training film for institutes and workshops, "Sociological Investigation in the Social Studies Class," is available for rental from the Audio-Visual Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. SO 000 245, SO 000 246, and SO 000 247 are related documents. (SBE)

ED 042676

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION
& WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

SRSS IN THE HOMESTRETCH

By

Robert C. Angell
Executive Director

Sociological Resources for the Social Studies

Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association

Washington, D. C.
September, 1970

SO 000 241

Though the Committee on the Social Studies Curriculum of American Secondary Schools of the American Sociological Association was appointed in 1962, it did not bring to birth its sole offspring, Sociological Resources for the Social Studies, until August 1964. During the long gestation, the Chairman of the Committee, Professor Neal Gross, then of Harvard, and his colleagues engaged in discussions and negotiations with the National Science Foundation about the character of the hoped-for child and its care and feeding.

The principal objective of the project was to produce and make available to senior high schools throughout the country sociological materials of high quality for the social studies program. This objective was to be reached by the collaboration of competent sociologists and resourceful high school teachers. The emphasis was to be on active learning. Students were to discover how sociologists reach their conclusions by doing inductive exercises themselves. The Committee also envisioned that the organization of the project would be decentralized. The teams of sociologists and high school teachers would be set up to do the writing in all parts of the country and the system of evaluative trials would be far-flung.

The first headquarters of the project was set up on the Dartmouth College campus in Hanover, New Hampshire, with Dr. Robert A. Feldmesser as the Executive Director. During the first year a small staff was gathered, the Committee and Dr. Feldmesser engaged in intensive planning, the cooperation of sociologists and high school teachers was sought, and the first allocations of responsibility to joint teams made.

Since only about one-tenth of the students took courses in sociology in senior high school, the Committee decided its first task was to infiltrate existing social studies courses with short units on sociological topics. Thus was born what is now called the Episodes in Social Inquiry Series.

This series has begun to bear fruit. Five episodes have been published. And six more are in press. The titles of these first eleven are *The Incidence and Effects of Poverty in the United States, Testing for Truth: A Study of Hypothesis Evaluation, Leadership in American Society: A Case Study of Black Leadership, Images of People, Social Mobility in the United States, Social Change: The Case of Rural China, Small Group Processes, Science and Society, Religion in the United States, Simulating Social Conflict,* and *Family Form and Social Setting.* SRSS will be submitting twenty-nine episodes in all to our publisher, Allyn and Bacon, Inc. by the spring of 1971. The last trials were conducted in schools across the country during this past spring, the feedback from those trials is now being processed, and the headquarters staff will begin revision of these six episodes in December. Allyn and Bacon is obligated by our contract to publish only twenty episodes but, in the light of the great success of the first units put out, it seems likely that they will accept a larger number, if not all. The whole series should be in print by the end of 1971.

In accordance with the Committee's plans, all of the episodes emphasize the inquiry mode of learning. There are always exercises in which the students have to analyze data, and in many cases, the data are gathered by the students themselves from their school or the community. Both the original writers of the episode and the staff members who have revised them have shown great ingenuity in developing exercises that interest and stimulate students. From all we can learn the episodes are a success in another way. They are being used in a wide variety of social studies courses such as Problems of Democracy, Social Problems, American History, Political Science, and Economics.

During the second year of the project, the Committee decided to move forward with the second task that it had foreseen, the writing of a new and inquiry-oriented sociology course for the eleventh and twelfth grades. Since there was a difference of opinion with respect to the best approach in such a course, a workshop for sociologists and distinguished high school teachers was set up at Dartmouth during the summer of 1966. Recommendations from that workshop were transmitted to the Committee, the staff added its comments, and an agreed plan was prepared.

Dr. Feldmesser had already realized that the project was going to take much longer than originally projected and that he could not delay his other professional interests until its completion. He, therefore, asked to be relieved. Since I was near the end of my academic career, I was approached by the Committee and assumed the responsibility in the fall of 1966. The headquarters was then moved to Ann Arbor.

We were most fortunate to secure the services of Professor Everett K. Wilson, now of the University of North Carolina, to work with the project for two years. One of his chief responsibilities was the detailed planning of the sociology course, the liaison work with the teams of sociologists and high school teachers who originally wrote it, and the fitting together of their joint efforts into the first trial version of the course. This edition was revised for a broad national trial in the spring of 1969, has now been revised again, and agreements reached on the version that will be published by Allyn and Bacon in the fall of 1971 to appear with a January 1972 copyright.

The title of the course, *Inquiries in Sociology,* is fitting since, like the episodes, it includes inductive exercises. Unlike the episodes, with

which sets of finished transparencies for the overhead projector are optional, the course includes transparencies that are required for its successful teaching. As with the episodes, there are many "handouts" on which the students gather and analyze data. In the high school market, where books are used for several years, great care must be taken not to include any worksheets or blank tables which might be filled in by the students and thus spoil the process of inquiry for the next class.

Shortly after the Committee's decision to go ahead with the sociology course, they projected a third type of resource that was inspired by conversations between Professor Gross and Dr. Helen M. Hughes, formerly Editor of the *American Journal of Sociology*. This was a series of paperback books of readings on broad sociological topics which could be used as background for class work in a variety of social studies courses. The format of these books is quite unique. Dr. Hughes, to whom was delegated the responsibility for carrying out this part of the program, obtained the Committee's approval for books in seven fields of sociological interest. In each of these she secured from leading sociologists nominations of research articles and monographs that should be significant for high school students if they were translated into simple language. From these nominations, Dr. Hughes chose eighteen to twenty pieces which she then gave to free-lance writers with instructions to ignore the original text entirely and rewrite each piece in their own words. This eliminated all the jargon and the more difficult scientific discussion, but preserved the essential aspects of the research in a from that is understandable to high school students. In the case of each book, a distinguished sociologist has written an essay that draws together various contributions. The first four of these books ~~are~~ have just now being published: *Life in Families, Racial and Ethnic Relations, Cities and City Life,* and *Delinquents and Criminals: Their Social World.* A fifth entitled *Social Organizations,* has been submitted to Allyn and Bacon. The last two volumes

are still in preparation. They will be called *Crowd and Mass Behavior* and *Population Growth and the Mass Society*. The last of these should be published by late 1971.

One of the significant features of the total product of SRSS is that it gives considerable choice to the high school teacher in putting together the contents of a course. For courses in Social Problems and Problems of Democracy an entire semester might be given over to the study of six or eight episodes. Or the teacher could put together a mix of episodes and readings books. Our course is designed for one semester, but it could be extended to a year by piecing it out with either episodes or readings books or both. In this respect the work of SRSS is timely because high school teachers more and more are desirous of designing their own courses.

When the trial versions of SRSS episodes were first shown at the American Sociological Association meetings in San Francisco in 1967, they attracted a great deal of attention from community college teachers. After consultation with the National Science Foundation, the Committee decided to change the project's original name of Sociological Resources for Secondary Schools to Sociological Resources for the Social Studies. This frees community colleges from embarrassment in using SRSS materials. There is also the possibility that the community college subsidiary of Allyn and Bacon, the Holbrook Press, will put out special community college editions of some of our units.

SRSS has produced a teacher training film, *Sociological Investigation in the Social Studies Class*, which is designed to be shown at institutes and workshops of social studies teachers. It emphasizes the sorts of exercises which are included in the episodes and the course. This was photographed in the Plymouth, Michigan, high school. The class was unrehearsed. Copies of

this film can be rented from the Audio-Visual Center of the University of Michigan.

At its November 1968 meeting the Committee began to consider what steps the American Sociological Association ought to take in contemplation of the conclusion of SRSS in 1971. They decided that the producing of curricular materials should not be the only interest evinced by ASA in the problems of the teaching of sociology in high schools. They recommended that a new committee be appointed which would be concerned with the improvement of the pre-service and in-service training of teachers whose classes were using sociological materials, with improving the contacts between departments of sociology and schools of education, and perhaps with ongoing research into the practices and needs of high schools in the social studies field. Dr. Daisy Tagliacozzo of the Illinois Institute of Technology has headed such a committee since the Fall of 1969. In its membership are included high school teachers as well as college sociologists and social studies educators.

Other activities by the American Sociological Association in the pre-college field are under discussion. Among the suggestions are a special membership category for high school teachers, a special journal suited to their needs, and a service center at ASA headquarters. Conclusions on these matters will probably not be reached until early 1971.

Present plans are that SRSS will cease to exist on August 31, 1971, almost exactly seven years after the project was born. A great deal of effort by sociologists and high school teachers both in the field and at headquarters, and by editors and clerical personnel at headquarters has been expended in those years. The National Science Foundation has been very generous in its support. The Committee on the Social Studies Curriculum of

American Secondary Schools headed by Dr. Gross through all these years has been a source of wise policy guidance and during these last months has devoted a great deal of time to passing judgment on all the units that have been prepared before they are published. The American Sociological Association owes them a great debt. Thus SRSS goes into the homestretch.